

Message Text

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ACTION AID-59

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-25 ISO-00 SCI-06 PC-10 USIA-15

CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01 DODE-00 AGR-20 INT-08

COME-00 SWF-02 DRC-01 /168 W
----- 070338

P 290842Z MAY 74

FM AMEMBASSY LOME

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7726

INFO AMEMBASSY NIAMEY PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY COTONOU PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY OUAGADOUGOU

AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY ACCRA

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AFDROUGHT

ROME PASS FODAG

PARIS FOR HELMAN

E.O. 11652: N/A

SUBJ: POSSIBLE DIVERSIONS FROM COTONOU TO LOME

REF: A) COTONOU 809; B) LOME 1053; C) STATE 104323; D) ROME 6849.

1. LOME PORT HAS CAPACITY HANDLE 4,000 MT FROM DEL RIO IN EARLY JUNE AND 3,329 MT FROM DELTA URUGUAY IN EARLY JULY IF THESE SHIPS MUST BE DIVERTED FROM COTONOU. UNLOADING AND MOVEMENT OUT OF LOME OF GRAIN SHIPMENTS DESTINED FOR UPPER VOLTA WHICH ALSO EXPECTED EARLY JUNE WOULD NOT NECESSARILY BE AFFECTED BY SUCH DIVERSIONS. LATEST INFORMATION FROM LOCAL DELTA AGENT IS THAT DEL RIO NOW DUE LOME 6/3, MOKOTO WILL ARRIVE 6/7 AND NOPAL
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LUNA 6/15.

2. WHILE PORT HAS CAPACITY ACCEPT AND STORE THESE QUANTITIES IN ITS WAREHOUSES WITHOUT DIFFICULTY, WE ESTIMATE NOT ENOUGH TRUCKS WILL BE AVAILABLE TO MOVE 4,000 MT FROM DEL RIO TO NIGER BEFORE JUNE 30 PRE-POSITIONING DEADLINES. PRELIMINARY WFP-AID ESTIMATE IS THAT WITH DETAILED AND COORDINATED PLANNING, MAXIMUM OF 4,000 MT PER MONTH COULD BE MOVED OUT OF LOME EITHER TO OUAGA OR NIAMEY. BOTH TOGOLESE AND VOLTAN TRUCKS WOULD BE REQUIRED. WITH 2,000 MT EXPECTED BE UTILIZED BY SACOTRA FOR OUAGA, BALANCE OF 2,000 MT COULD BE AVAILABLE FOR NIGER RUN. THIS ASSUMES, OF COURSE, THAT OTHER DIVERSIONS DO NOT OCCUR SUCH AS THAT WHICH OCCURRED WITH UNEXPECTED ARRIVAL MAY 23 OF THE EGEE WHICH DISCHARGED 1,500 MT OF FRENCH CORN FOR UPPER VOLTA. BELIEVE GHANIAN TRUCKS, WHICH HAVE BEEN EXCLUDED THIS YEAR FROM LOME-OUAGA ROUTE BY SYNDICATE OF TOGOLESE TRUCKERS, COULD BE USED TO AUGMENT CARRYING CAPACITY IF TOGOLESE TRUCKERS CAN BE ASSURED THEY WOULD SHARE FULLY IN NIGER BUSINESS. UNABLE THIS DATE EXTIMATE CONTRIBUTION GHANIAN TRUCKS COULD MAKE TO LOME-NIGER ROUTE. TRANSIT AGENTS ESTIMATE LOME-NIGER TURN-AROUND TIME TO BE 12 DAYS.

3. BEYOND FACT OF INADEQUATE TRUCKING CAPACITY, PRELIMINARY CONTACTS WITH TRANSPORTERS INDICATE THAT ALL INCLUSIVE MINIMUM PRICE FOR LOME-NIAMEY WOULD BE CFA 20,000/MT. LOCAL SOCOPAO AGENT AND SYNDICATE OF TOGOLESE TRUCKERS HAVE USED THIS FIGURE IN OUR DISCUSSIONS WHILE SOAEM-TRANSAFRICAINE-SVTR (VOLTAN TRUCKERS' SYNDICATE) QUOTED PRICE TO WFP REP OF CFA 23,400/MT. WE AWAITING SACOTRA PRICE ESTIMATE. CLEARLY, POL PRICES HAVE RISEN STEEPLY IN 1974 AS ALREADY REFLECTED IN SACOTRA'S RECENT CFA 3,000/MT PRICE INCREASE FOR LOME-OUAGA SHIPMENTS. HOWEVER, HIGH TENTATIVE PRICE OFFERS FOR LOME-NIAMEY SHIPMENTS APPEAR INDICATE TRUCKERS' INTENTION EXPLOIT THEIR VERY FAVORABLE BARGAINING POSITION IN ANY URGENT DIVERSION OF GRAIN SHIPMENTS. PRICE COLLUSION AMONG TRANSPORTERS SHOULD BE EXPECTED. IF OUR READING THIS SITUATION IS CORRECT, SACOTRA WOULD HAVE NO ALTERNATIVE BUT TO NEGOTIATE WITH THESE SAME TRUCKERS WHO HOLDING VERY HIGH CARDS.

4. AIDOFF CAN APPRECIATE DELTA LINES' INTENSE DESIRE AVOID REPEATING EXPERIENCE OF DELTA MEXICO WHICH DUE TO COTONOU LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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CONGESTION WAS FORCED IN EARLY MAY TO SPEND NEARLY TWO WEEKS IN PORT OF COTONOU. BELIEVE SITUATION IMPROVED TODAY (REF A) AND DELTA SHIPS WILL NOT ENCOUNTER INORDINATE DELAYS. FURTHERMORE, PARAS (2) AND (3) LEAD US TO CONCLUDE THAT BY DIVERTING DEL RIO TO LOME, AID WOULD ONLY MODESTLY INCREASE FLOW OF FOODS TO NIGER BEFORE JUNE 30 AND AT A HIGH COST. AIDOFF AND EMBASSY COTONOU ARE IN AGREEMENT THAT WE SHOULD CONCENTRATE OUR ATTENTION ON REMOVING BLOCKAGES IN EXISTING SYSTEMS AT

COTONOU AND GET THEM WORKING AS THEY SHOULD. ON BASIS
INFORMATION AVAILABLE HERE, CONCUR WITH COTONOU RECOMMENDATION
THAT DEL RIO NOT REPEAT NOT BE DIVERTED LOME.
RAWLS

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Message Attributes

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